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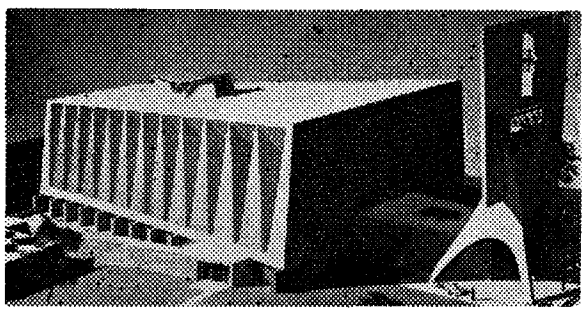

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THE COMMONWEAL

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THE COMMONWEAL

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, LITERATURE AND THE ARTS

Dependence on Nuclear Weapons

THIS NATION'S steadily growing commitment to thermonuclear weapons is encountering scanty public notice. Perhaps most citizens who are willing to face its implications feel that the problem is beyond them. Even in religious circles the amassing of such weapons, and the setting up of retaliatory mechanisms involving indiscriminate, wholesale slaughter of one's fellow-men, receive infrequent attention.

One index of the direction things are taking is the inauguration of the national shelter program. A dozen shelters are first to be constructed in Forestry Service buildings in several states. Mr. Kennedy's present budget calls for an expenditure of thirty-five millions for fall-out shelters in federal buildings. Civil Defense officials and authorities in the various states talk rather vaguely about a community shelter system on a vast scale.

A second indication of the ever deeper national involvement in thermonuclear weapon expansion is the continuation of the test series in the Pacific. Scientists disagree on the probable effect on the Van Allen radiation belt of the attempt to explode an American hydrogen bomb hundreds of miles above the earth. But the United States' unilateral decision to conduct so exploratory a test in outer space has understandably aroused resentment in many lands.

Moreover, it is announced that the Seventh Army, which patrols the 500 miles of Communist border between the Fulda Gap and the Austrian Alps, now has a type of bazooka capable of firing tactical thermonuclear weapons. These American troops also have atomic cannon and missiles with a range of several hundred miles. The New York *Times*, apparently without afterthought, mentions the "once controversial policy assumption" that "small tactical nuclear weapons can be used in ground hostilities without necessarily provoking a general nuclear war." The army in Europe is exerting pressure for a new missile with a range of a thousand miles. And several NATO allies envisage this as "an independent nuclear deterrent under NATO command."

The assumption that this country can mount a viable defense against a major thermonuclear attack has been sharply challenged in recent findings. Four doctors studying the Boston area for the *New England Journal of Medicine* come up with figures such as these: out of less than three million people two million would die within twenty-four hours of an attack and half a million more would be injured. It would not be possible for the surviving doctors, no matter how heroic, to attend to many of the injured in time; drugs would be badly lacking. The doctors' conclusion is that: "Prevention is the only therapy." Yet this is the type of defense situation confronting Washington and the sort of destruction it is considering for the Russian people.

Even continued testing in the atmosphere—thereby provoking additional Soviet tests—can have deleterious consequences. Dr. Russell H. Morgan, Professor of Radiology at Johns Hopkins, has testified about the dangers of iodine-131 and strontium-90 contamination from the next Soviet test series. As before, fall-out is expected to be concentrated over several American cities. Medical testimony is not agreed whether certain of the suggested "countermeasures" might themselves constitute health hazards. Besides, the National Advisory Committee on Radiation declares that present monitoring systems report contamination as much as three or four months after the food has been eaten.

THE PRINCIPAL focus for the protest against the hazards of continued testing and the menace of thermonuclear war comes from spokesmen of the neutralist peoples. Archbishop Makarios of Cyprus, Secretary U Thant of the U.N. and the neutrals at the Geneva conference are among the most outspoken critics of the United States, the Soviet Union and Britain. France is also a target for their criticism, at least implicitly, which serves as a reminder

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of the urgency of establishing controls before several others develop their own atomic weapons.

What other means of national defense and prevention of war are available? The Administration has been strengthening our conventional armaments and ability to fight guerrilla wars. The build-up of NATO has reached the point where thirty Allied combat divisions are in sight, enough of a force to make the Kremlin think twice before attacking.

To prevent the brush-fire wars that can lead to wider conflicts, the United Nations contemplates the creation of new peace forces like those in the Congo and the Middle East. One is in view for Ruanda Urundi and another for New Guinea. Eventually such task groups would be constituent parts of a U.N. Global Peace Force.

As the danger of a holocaust increases, more and more non-pacifists are beginning to question this nation's thermonuclear policy. The American Faculty Council for the Gradualist Way to Peace is one new group established to formulate alternatives to thermonuclear defense. It is a group of distinguished scientists, theologians, legal experts and sociologists. It seeks to safeguard peace without sacrificing security or the values of any society. But whether or not this group, or any other, comes up with a practicable program, the present thermonuclear defense mechanism seems increasingly difficult to justify.

Condition: Critical

"A MAN of high mental capacity, daring, fortitude, and vast official experience in public affairs and political infighting . . . brilliant conduct of momentous foreign missions, successful personal encounters with dangerous adversaries like Premier Khrushchev. . . ." Who else but Richard Milhous Nixon?

The rest of Arthur Krock's description would have immediately given away whatever mystery the foregoing phrases might have held. Added to his other qualifications, wrote Mr. Krock in the New York *Times,* this candidate's career "has included two terms as Vice President of the United States" and "the loss of the Presidency by a hair-breadth only." Yet the Republican voters of California have plunged Mr. Nixon into his seventh (or is it eighth?) crisis, perhaps the most serious of all.

The former Vice President gambled when he chose to run for Governor of his home state, but at the time of his decision the odds seemed much more favorable. Democratic incumbent Governor Edmund G. ("Pat") Brown's hold on his office appeared to have been weakened by his handling of several local hot potatoes, and there was evidence that California's always unpredictable voters were in the midst of a swing toward conservatism. As for winning the Republican nomination, that seemed no trouble at all for the ex-Vice President.

Unluckily for Mr. Nixon, everything looks different now. He was challenged for the nomination by an ultra-conservative unknown, State Assemblyman Joseph C. Shell, who attacked him relentlessly for being soft on "leftists" and "internationalists." Shell became the hero of the far-right Republican wing, including the John Birchers whom Mr. Nixon had repudiated, although as gently as he could. And in the midst of this savage intra-party brawling (or perhaps because of it), Governor Brown began to show increasing popularity in the state.

Mr. Nixon's campaign revealed the vise he was in. He ignored the vicious attacks of Assemblyman Shell, preached incessantly the need for Republican harmony. He criticized the administration of Governor Brown but was reduced to such things as declaring his approval of capital punishment for narcotics peddlers and promising to take personal charge of "picking anti-Communist textbooks for schools."

The primary is over, and Mr. Nixon has won. But thirty-five per cent of California's Republicans voted against him, and they and their leader have shown no inclination to switch their support now that the primary has gone against them. Since California's registered Democrats outnumber Republicans by more than a million, simple arithmetic indicates that in order to win Mr. Nixon needs at least ninety per cent of the Republican votes and twenty per cent of the Democratic votes.

For anybody else, we might say at this point that, Q.E.D., Richard Nixon has only disaster to look forward to. It certainly looks that way, but then he is, as we need no reminding, "a man of high mental capacity, daring, fortitude, and vast official experience in public affairs and political infighting." Especially political infighting.

Better If Sooner

LIKE ALL other Catholics committed to racial justice and equality, we welcome the news that Archbishop Paul J. Hallinan plans to integrate the Catholic schools in Atlanta this coming September. Doubtless, as in the case of Archbishop Rummel, it was a decision which required some nerve.

Unfortunately, we still do not find it possible to be rapturous about the Church's racial role in the South. Scattered instances of boldness and risk-taking have appeared over the years since the 1954 Supreme Court decision. But far more widespread

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has been a course of exceeding caution. It is certainly to the point to commend those bishops who have taken the lead in the South, but it seems to us quite another matter to hold up the Church in the South as a model of racial leadership.

A recent report of the Southern Regional Council merely underscores this point. Treated by some diocesan papers as if it showed a triumphant march, the Council's report revealed that nine out of twenty-two Southern dioceses now have some school integration. That only leaves a few more than half to go. Statistically, at least, we suppose this is progress. Yet somehow this "progress" leaves us depressed. After almost eight years one might have expected much more. But far be it from us to suggest that the example of federal law and the teaching of the Church ought to be sufficient to induce prompt and immediate integration in all dioceses. We wouldn't want to be thought radical.

Room for Maneuver

THE QUESTION of economic aid to Communist-controlled governments has never been a simple one. At best, the most that can be hoped for from such aid is that the recipient countries will be encouraged to pursue an independent political course; and the specific aim of financial grants and loans is that heterodox Communist countries will not be economically dependent on the Soviet Union or the Soviet bloc. The assumption, of course, is that economic independence provides the most effective basis for political independence.

At the worst, naturally, the aid we provide may simply shore-up the Communist regimes and, in the end, be used to further the power and ambitions of world Communism. The assumption of those who oppose such aid—apart from purportedly moral objections—is that a weak Communist economy provides the best possible basis for a popular revolt; or at least will blunt the effectiveness of Communist control and power.

Unfortunately, there are apparently good theoretical arguments for each viewpoint; neither one is self-evidently valid. And to complicate any judgment, it is by no means clear just what evidence counts for either side. If, as he has done recently, Marshal Tito affirms his ideological solidarity with the Soviet Union, does this necessarily mean he is not "independent"? Or, on the other hand, could we have any assurance that if we now abandoned aid to Yugoslavia its current agricultural and economic difficulties would prove to be to our advantage? Or that Communism in Poland would flounder should we cease aiding that country?

No flat answer is possible to any of these questions. Precisely for that reason, the wisest thing this country can do is to play the situation by ear, always leaving open the possibility at given moments of either suspending aid or increasing it. The blindest thing we could do would be to take a rigid, doctrinaire stand against such aid: a stand which would presuppose we could predict the future and have absolute confidence that our national interests would be served by a blanket refusal of aid. It is one thing to oppose specific types of aid at specific moments; it is quite another to pretend omniscience and oppose all aid. Yet this latter was the stance taken by those Republicans and Democrats who last week added an amendment to the President's foreign aid bill which would prohibit aid to any country having a "Communist or Marxist form of government."

Fortunately, cooler heads prevailed—especially among Senators from farm states who suddenly realized they were going to lose a surplus farm product dumping ground. In the end the amendment was modified to permit the shipment of such surpluses. In other respects, however, the President has been left with his hands tied. We can only hope that the House, where the bill now goes, will have better sense and give back to the President some of the healthy room for maneuver he now possesses.

Trouble in Spain

IN CONSERVATIVE circles, critics of Franco Spain have been for these many years dismissed, if not denounced, as leftists or worse. Now, however, it has been officially admitted by the regime that Franco's opponents include workers, Catholic organizations and even priests—as well as, of course, the perennial "Communists." Furthermore, recent weeks have brought strikes, open protests, bombings—increasing signs that the Generalissimo is no longer able to maintain the stability and order he used to boast of to the decadent democracies.

Franco has resorted to some harsh measures to combat the new wave of dissension, such as suspension of the right to free residence in Spain, arrest and exile for political opponents, and it may be that he will take more drastic steps. But the fact that the strikers and critics of his government still go unpunished, and that anti-government spokesmen and publications continue their criticism, suggests that Franco's grip on the life of Spain has been irretrievably loosened. When—not if—that grip is cast off completely, we pray that it can be done without the bloodshed and suffering which have so wounded Spain in the past.

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The World's Catholics

AN ARTICLE in the June issue of *Information*, the popular Paulist monthly, will shake up a good many readers, I suspect. Written by William J. Whalen and entitled "Don't Count 410 million Catholics," the piece has a simple thesis. It is usually said that Catholics number more than five hundred million. But, says Mr. Whalen, if you include only practicing Catholics rather than simply the baptized, not more than one hundred and forty million people can be counted. In other words, if one out of six persons in the world today is a baptized Catholic, about one in twenty-one is a practicing Catholic.

This is obviously a tricky business. Technically, any one who is baptized is a Catholic. But Mr. Whalen is interested in determining what he calls our "real strength," and for this he uses such measures as Mass attendance, fast and abstinence, and performance of one's Easter duty.

Such measurements are not completely satisfactory. Catholicism is a way of life, involving love of God and love of neighbor. In some cultures people take a far less stringent attitude than we do on matters like Sunday Mass attendance, yet they think of themselves as good Catholics and Catholicism can have a profound effect on their cultures and their lives. Yet such things are hard to put in a scale, and Mr. Whalen limited himself, perhaps necessarily, to such hard-and-fast criteria as regularity of attendance at Sunday Mass and the like.

Using these standards, then, Mr. Whalen takes a hard look at the figures. The world's largest concentration of Catholics is in western and southern Europe. Yet, he says, the only nation where more than half the adult Catholic population attends Mass on Sunday is Ireland.

Italy's population is counted as 99.5% Catholic, France's as 82.8%, Spain's as 99.7%. But, writes Mr. Whalen, "Anyone who has lived in Europe knows that the percentage of baptized Catholics who attend Sunday Mass in Italy, France and Spain seldom exceeds 20%—and most of these are women and children. . . . The working classes and intellectuals, considered as groups, unfortunately are estranged from the Church of their baptism."

Add to this the Communist persecution of religion behind the Iron Curtain, and the European future does not look happy. Mr. Whalen sums it up starkly: "For the majority of European Catholics, only the mark of baptism, memories of childhood religious instruction, a vague association with a religious heritage, and the rites of marriage and burial are left to remind them of the Faith in which they were baptized as infants."

South America is counted as having more than one hundred and thirty million Catholics, and the continent is described as 92.3% Catholic. "But," Mr. Whalen asks, "is there even one country in South America where as many as ten out of one hundred baptized Catholics meet the minimum requirements for membership in good standing?" With sixty-two million baptized, Brazil is said to be the largest Catholic country in the world, and its population is listed as 93.5% Catholic. Nonetheless, "a study in Rio de Janeiro indicated that only 15% of the Catholics in that city of more than three and a half million people attended Sunday Mass; few of these were men."

Here a comment by Father Albert J. Nevins of Maryknoll on the religious situation in Latin America is highly appropriate. "Catholicism has been a traditional way of life for centuries," Father Nevins said. "Yet in large part this Catholicism is nothing more than a cultural shell."

The picture in Asia and Afica is not bright either. With the national population growing by leaps and bounds, the Catholic percentage in India is getting smaller rather than larger. In areas like Ceylon and Indonesia Christianity is identified with former colonial powers. "Throughout Asia," Mr. Whalen writes, "the scandal of divided Christianity plagues missionaries in all their efforts. . . . In Africa, Christianity too often is identified as the white man's religion." And with the growth of world population occurring primarily in the non-Christian nations of Asia and Africa, the world-wide ratio of Catholics to non-Catholics is almost certain to grow smaller rather than larger in the years that lie ahead.

By comparison, the Church in the United States comes off rather well. The official Catholic population figure is slightly over forty-two million men, women, and children. Sunday Mass attendance is high—some sociologists think as high as 70%, though this may be exaggerated. Surveys place the number of lapsed Catholics at anywhere from 20 to 43% of the Catholic population. For North America as a whole, Mr. Whalen counts forty million practicing Catholics out of fifty million baptized; by minimal standards of Church membership he believes that the United States has the largest body of practicing Catholics in the world.

All in all, though, the picture Mr. Whalen paints is not very happy, and I suppose there are those who will say he should have kept his conclusions to himself. I am not one of them. We have to face up to reality, however unpleasant, and whatever dissent some of us may have on this or that element in Mr. Whalen's findings, our concern should be with the facts themselves—not with the idea that someone has dared to put them on paper.

JAMES O'GARA

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The Catholic Layman in America Today

JOHN TRACY ELLIS

EACH AGE in the long and eventful life of the Church has its distinguishing characteristics. When the history of this second half of the twentieth century is written there will, in all probability, be few more striking notes than the emergence of the laity into a strong and active role as collaborators with the clergy in the apostolate. So marked has been this development that there has even emerged a theology of the lay movement, a new tract, as it were, which theologians have been refining in recent years in a way that suggests the revival of the part once played in the early Church by the deacon who assisted the priests and bishops in advancing the word of God through the ancient pagan world.

In part this expanding concept of the layman's place in the divine economy of salvation is an answer to a need. For every well-informed Catholic has for some-time been aware that the rate of increase of the faithful—to say nothing of the increase of potential converts among our separated brethren—has become so rapid that the supply of priests and religious for their spiritual care can in no way keep pace, with the result that the emphasis on the need for lay apostles is by no means confined to Latin America but has become virtually worldwide.

In fact, with the exception of certain favored areas like the Republic of Ireland and the Archdiocese of Boston in our own country, lay Catholics—or non-Catholics who may offer a prospect of conversion—far outdistance the proportional growth of priestly and religious vocations. That is one reason why our generation, more than any other in modern times, has heard so insistent a call for lay assistance and participation in the work of the Church.

In recognition of this central fact of contemporary Catholicism there was convened in 1951 the first World Congress of the Lay Apostolate, which was followed six years later by a Second World Congress at Rome in October, 1957. To both of these gatherings Pope Pius XII delivered memorable addresses which outlined the respective roles that the clergy and the laity were expected to play in furthering the apostolate so that it might embrace men of every continent, of every color, and of every race.

On both occasions the Pontiff made clear the necessary distinctions between the function of the clergy, particularly the bishops, who alone represent the teaching authority of the Church, and that of the laity who are asked to cooperate with those in ecclesiastical authority. But Pius XII was at pains to emphasize the layman's share, stating that—to quote the words he used in 1951—"the assistance rendered by the laity to the apostolate is an indispensable necessity."

Six years later the Holy Father returned to the same theme, delineating once more as precisely as possible the apostolic functions of the priest and of the layman. And in this latter address to the second World Congress Pius XII maintained that the value and efficacy of the apostolate exercised by any participant was dependent not on his rank but on what the Pope called "his personal ability and supernatural gifts." Lay teachers, religious, missionary catechists, and all to whom the Church entrusted the truths of faith he said, "can properly apply to themselves the Lord's words: 'You are the salt of the earth,' and 'You are the light of the world.'"

IN VIEW OF this development in world Catholicism, what, one may ask, is the situation in which the Catholic laity of the United States find themselves, and how does that situation fit them to offer the maximum response to the responsibilities which the Holy See has asked them to assume?

First, they constitute a body of nearly forty-three million souls joined by a deep supernatural faith and an abiding love for Christ's Church that makes them one of the world's most promising reservoirs of Catholic strength and renewal. Theirs is a faith with historic roots that reach back to the Spanish pioneers who brought Catholicism to Florida, the Southwest, and California before the United States itself was born; a faith that was practiced by the French in the Mississippi Valley and the region of the Great Lakes when what we know as the Middle West was still largely an un-

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tracked wilderness; a faith for which the tiny minority of their English Catholic forebears in colonial Maryland and Pennsylvania suffered ostracism and legal proscription.

In other words, the impressive Catholic laity of today must not be thought a new thing on the American scene; they are rather the product of between three hundred and four hundred years of growth in the soil of this Republic. Secondly, this laity—thanks to God's bountiful providence and to the frugal living and dedicated labor of their ancestors and of themselves—are the wealthiest group of Catholics in the world, and thus in a material and external sense their numbers and their wealth constitute them the strongest laity within the universal Church.

More important, however, than numbers and wealth has been the intellectual advance of the Catholics of the United States. It is a feature that gains strength with each passing year as thousands of young Americans stream forth from the colleges and universities of the land intellectually equipped to occupy an articulate and meaningful place in national life. With this heightened intellectual and cultural prestige, with the deepening knowledge that accompanies a superior education, there has inevitably appeared a closer scrutiny of all that pertains to the Church, a sharper and more critical turn of mind which makes the educated Catholic layman of this second half of the twentieth century a quite different person than his unlettered immigrant grandparents of two or three generations ago.

HERE, THEN, is a new factor in the Catholicism of our day, a factor that is bound to assume increasing importance in the years ahead, a factor that has, indeed, already had a major share in accelerating the speed at which the Catholic Church of this country has come of age. With this new factor there has come in some sectors of the Catholic community a note of strain in clerical-lay relations.

Here I would wish to emphasize that I have in mind situations quite apart from the indefensible conduct of an insignificant minority of lay Catholics in New Orleans who have gained national notoriety by their defiance of the racial integration policies of their Archbishop. I refer rather to the educated and loyal layman, conscious of the improved position he occupies over that of his grandparents and conscious, too, of the emphasis that the Holy See has repeatedly given of late to the need for the laity to take a more active share in the Church's life and work. It is this type of Catholic layman —devout, fundamentally respectful of authority, alert, and highly trained—who is seeking to find a channel through which he may contribute his talents and special skills to the apostolate of his time.

In that connection I am reminded of a remark made by John Lancaster Spalding, Bishop of Peoria, in 1889 in a letter to William J. Onahan, at the time probably Chicago's most outstanding Catholic layman—a remark quoted by Father David F. Sweeny, O.F.M., in his life of Bishop Spalding. Speaking of the Catholic lay congress being planned for the autumn of that year, Bishop Spalding was intent that there should be some practical results, and in instancing lay cooperation with the clergy he strongly urged that Onahan should, as he said, "devise some means by which laymen may really take part in Church work. . . . Let us cease," said the Bishop, "to pretend to wish to do what we have no intention of doing."

It would be untrue to say that there has been no progress in that respect since Bishop Spalding wrote seventy-three years ago. But it would be less than honest to represent the channels of lay participation in the Church's varied apostolate as fully open to their zeal. Thus James O'Gara of The Commonweal wrote not long ago of the deep conviction that many laymen had concerning the principles of the Papal encyclicals. But, he said, when the layman tries to implement his conviction by doing something about it, he "is frequently rebuffed." He then declared: "All too often, he is made to feel like a stranger where he should be most welcome, in his own parish. This seems to me a major problem, and one I think should be faced more squarely. Until it is, I am afraid lay participation will remain more pious wish than actual fact."

It is, indeed, a major problem, and with the writer's rather lugubrious conclusion I feel compelled to agree. Too many laymen trying to find their place in apostolic action have experienced embarrassing encounters with a certain type of churchman who seems never to have heard Pius XII's exhortation to the clerical delegates of the first World Congress of the lay Apostolate when he said: "let them encourage them (the laity), suggesting enterprises to them and welcoming with good will the enterprises which they suggest, approving them in a broadminded way according to their opportuneness. In decisive battles, it is often at the front that the most useful initiatives arise."

MORE THAN a century has passed since Orestes Brownson, the best-known Catholic layman of his day, reminded the readers of his *Quarterly Review* that theirs was an age when education and intelligence were not confined to the clergy, and that the grounds of controversy between the Church and its enemies were not exclusively theological, but such as would ultimately be decided by reason rather than authority. In these circumstances, said Brownson, in October of 1860, "the fullest liberty must be given to laymen, compatible with the supremacy of the spiritual order and the discipline of the Church."

If that could be said with warrant in 1860, with how much more cogency do the changed conditions of our

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day permit it to be said in 1962. Obviously, care must be taken in the layman's execution of his apostolic mandate so that what he says and what he does may not transgress the limits imposed upon him by Catholic doctrine and that he may not find himself at cross purposes with what the Catholic sense would interpret as the legitimate exercise of authority by his ecclesiastical superiors. But by the same token the continued harmony and good order of the Catholic community make it imperative that the clergy be persuaded that present conditions call for a relaxing of some of the power and authority they have been accustomed to exercise over the laity in matters not directly pertaining to their divine mission; that they share, in other words, with the laymen in those areas of the Church's life where the latter's special training and competence entitle them to participate actively in fulfillment of the directives of the Holy See.

Fortunately, the Catholic Church in this country has never been handicapped by the devastating tradition of anti-clericalism that has proved so detrimental to religion in much of western Europe and of Latin America. Once only in our history have the relations of clergy and laity undergone a real crisis, when at the close of the eighteenth century there arose the movement known as lay trusteeism which continued to plague certain sections of the American Church as late as the Civil War. It was a costly experience for which a rebellious minority of the laity and a small but defiant and ambitious group of priests were equally to blame. But thanks to the fundamental loyalty of the vast majority of the laity, and to the docile and zealous character of most of the clergy, by the mid-century the worst evils of lay trusteeism had run their course.

Meanwhile, between the hundreds of thousands of incoming immigrants—most of whom were poor, illiterate, and without guidance in a strange land—and the priests who either accompanied them or whom they found on their arrival, there were forged the strongest bonds of affection and mutual esteem as they joined hands to establish their religious life—often in a hostile environment—as well as to insure their material welfare by mutual assistance. The result was the emergence of a relationship between the two ranks that earned the admiration of the Catholic world, a model that has endured to our own day and that is still, thank God, essentially intact.

Yet it would be a disservice to the Church that we love were we to deny the presence in our midst of symptoms that suggest an anti-clerical sentiment hitherto unknown to American Catholics. In its issue of April 16 of this year, *America* noted this phenomenon in an editorial that made somber reading for those whose knowledge of history recalled the price that the Church paid in Europe and Latin America during the nineteenth century because of the deadly poison of anti-clericalism. Up to the present we have been mercifully spared from this virus, and it is a matter of prime importance for the wholesome Catholic life we have known in the United States that we continue to be kept free from its lethal influence.

IF I were asked to suggest the most effective weapons with which to combat anti-clericalism, I should be inclined to answer as follows. First, the exercise by both clergy and laity of extreme sensitivity and forbearance in their relations with each other so that nothing be said or done that may exasperate or give cause for needless irritation or offense. And in this category principal emphasis should be placed, I think, on public statements that by the harshness of their tone or the lack of sympathy that they breathe, are likely to wound the feelings of others.

Secondly, there should be a steady and deliberate opening up of new channels for apostolic action to the layman, such as has taken place, for example, in the archdiocese of Montreal where the entire school board has been given over to laymen and in the diocese of Providence where seven out of eleven members of the diocesan school board are laymen. For when one pauses to consider it, could there be any more appropriate arena wherein to implement the layman's apostolic zeal than membership on the board that frames the policies and directs the destinies of the schools that his children attend?

Another important area is the Family Life Apostolate where, I am reliably informed, at least one hundred thousand married couples at the present time are engaged in giving lectures, conducting conferences, writing articles and books, appearing on television and radio programs, participating in neighborhood and community activities in their role as Catholic husbands and wives, and in some dioceses even acting as marriage counsellors.

Thirdly, I think of the Catholic press as an area which, it seems to me, is peculiarly fitted for the laymen and where a number of lay journalists have clearly proven that they not only can conduct a Catholic newspaper with high satisfaction but, perhaps, can do it better than the priest by reason of their technical training and the total dedication that they can bring to the task

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which the priest is denied because of his simultaneous commitment to other responsibilities.

And last, but by no means the least, are the varied good works of the National Council of Catholic Men and the National Council of Catholic Women which for approximately forty years have been doing yeoman work in activating the laity to a more intelligent and organized service to the Catholic cause. These aspects of the life of the modern Church, then, the diocesan school board, the Family Life Apostolate, and the Catholic press, and the two National Councils have already given proof in certain dioceses that they hold the key for the layman who wishes to function actively in the Church, and that in a way that redounds not only to the advancement of the Catholic apostolate, but as well to the layman's personal honor and distinction.

THAT THE percentage of highly educated and specially trained laymen in the American Church will increase is certain; that this fact will create a more exacting and searching spirit among the laity concerning what they find in the Church is equally certain. It thus behooves all of us, clergy and laity alike, to see to it that the infinitely precious tradition of intimate and warm clerical-lay relations that we of this generation have inherited from the American Catholic past is preserved and passed on to those who come after us.

At times this task will demand patience and forbearance on the part of each of us, but the ultimate good to be served is more than worth the effort, for in the greater participation of the laity in the Church's works lies in part the solution for many of the problems of a harassed and under-staffed clerical body, and in the new avenues opened to lay activity will there be afforded the means for increasing and strengthening the Catholic laymen of the United States along the lines that John Henry Newman had in mind when toward the close of his famous 1851 "lectures on the present position of Catholics in England" he said this:

"What I desiderate in Catholics is the gift of bringing out what their religion is; it is one of these 'better gifts,' of which the Apostle bids you be 'zealous.' You must not hide your talent in a napkin, or your light under a bushel. I want a laity, not arrogant, not rash in speech, not disputatious, but men who know their religion, who enter into it, who know just where they stand, who know what they hold, and what they do not, who know their creed so well, that they can give an account of it, who know so much of history that they can defend it. . . . I have no apprehensions you will be the worse Catholics for familiarity with these subjects, provided you cherish a vivid sense of God above and keep in mind that you have souls to be judged and to be saved."

Terror in Algeria

GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN

TO HAVE LIVED for the last two months in Algeria as I have done, and to become involved in all the most dramatic and ghastly events there, has a strange psychological effect. The first impressions of being in a lunatic asylum vanish by and by, replaced by an all-dominating question: how would *you* behave if you were personally engaged in all this? Would you judge and condemn as you do now? The reply after some painful soul-searching is definite: no.

What remains in the end is a sense of nausea owing to all the blood, the explosions and the cheap death; and above all a sense of compassion for the people, on both sides, even for the youngsters of the O.A.S., even for the officers, "the colonels," who have misled this youth. Something is brewing here which goes far beyond the limited problem of Algeria, something which concerns us all, quite independently of nationality and creed.

"The generals" appear as unimportant—they are nothing but an ornament—and so do many of the French officers backing up the O.A.S. Their spirit is distorted by the fact that so many of them have been engaged in warfare now without interruption for twenty-three years, ever since the beginning of World War II. Even the "black-feet," the Europeans in Algeria, who are fanatically backing the O.A.S., appear as unimportant. Conditioned by propaganda, they do not think any more with their brains, but with their feelings and their recollections from childhood. They will one day understand and if necessary resettle in France, exactly as the Germans of the East have resettled in Western Germany.

The problem lies deeper. It is the almost incredible attraction the O.A.S. exercises on the European youth, both in Algeria and in France. The most foolhardy raids

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and the most ghastly deeds have been committed by young men not yet twenty-one. And there is no difference as far as their social background is concerned. Smart playboys and college students collaborate fraternally with the sons of stevedores and taxi drivers; indeed, it seems as if, strange to say, the O.A.S. has its deepest roots precisely in the working class. When the French authorities for the first time tried to hit the O.A.S. where it is strongest, they attacked and besieged the European working class quarter Bab-el-Oued. Only a few years ago it was known as "the red Bab-el-Oued," for its inhabitants used to vote Communist. Among them are many refugees from the Spanish civil war, sturdy Communist and Anarchist veterans. Precisely they and their sons are now part of the hard core of the O.A.S.

ARTHUR KOESTLER once described a similar metamorphosis among the young Jews, mostly radical leftists, coming from the concentration camps in Europe to Israel. The name of his book is *Thieves in the Night* and many of these men and women were, according to the author, very soon transformed into radicals of the right in their fight for survival against the Arabs.

Here the Algerian Jews come into the picture. Among them there were martyrs, like Henri Alleq, for the cause of the Algerian freedom fighters; but ever since a synagogue was burned down and profaned last year by the Moslems in Algiers, the majority of the Algerian Jews sympathize exactly like the rest of the Europeans with the O.A.S. Moreover, for the Jewish youth as well as for many young Europeans, the tough Israeli terrorists during the war between Jews and Arabs in Palestine fourteen years ago appear almost as heroes.

For all these young men wherever they come from it is the same truly diabolic temptation: the efficiency of violence. They discover with a sense of awe the extraordinary cowardliness of the average citizen and feel like supermen in the neighborhood of death. They discover that everything seems to yield in front of violence, if only this violence is carried on with enough consistency and ruthlessness. Violence seems to solve all problems as by a magic stroke. Their excuse is the cruelty shown by the Moslem terrorists, who in fact started long before the O.A.S. did. Their excuse is also that violence prevents more violence if only it is brutal enough: it is the lesser of two evils. And above all it is efficient. Is not the password of our time efficiency? So why not use violence?

An important part of this youth are the paratroopers. They are the hand-picked elite of the French army, the toughest, the strongest, the most courageous. They are the representatives of a new military international existing in all countries under different names—they consider the American Marines, for instance, as their brothers. They have been used in Indo-China and in Algeria for the hardest clashes with the enemy and they are mostly brought to the site of the battle by air in order, like gladiators, to be in perfect condition. When a group of them was brought to England recently in order to meet their British colleagues there was an outcry on the British Left and with reason. The contamination could be dangerous.

Moreover, they look like inhabitants of Mars in their boots and uniforms of the same color as some insects mimicking their environment. Many of them have shorn heads like the Arabs and short beards. They despise civilians and nickname the other military *"culs de plomb,"* "leadbottoms." A whole literature has come into existence around them, martial songs and marches. When they parade a shock goes through the French crowds, a shock of fear and admiration. And now the authorities do not dare to let them parade any more. Their first big ordeal is to jump with a parachute. It is a first selection and those who do not succeed are eliminated with contempt, in order to join "the large sexless mass of leadbottoms," as the saying among the paratroopers goes. The training is hard and dangerous to such a point that a loss in human lives of six per cent is considered normal. A similar mentality can be found in the Foreign Legion.

THE STRANGE thing is that all this seems, in the first place, to attract the best among the French youth, the uneasy lot who wish to get something more out of life than only food, drink and women. Very often—and this is truly terrifying—it is at the beginning the purest idealism one can think of. I have met young French boys, hardly out of childhood engaged in a preparatory military training in order to join the paratroopers and I have found among them a spirit reminding me of seminarians training for the priesthood. They try by all means to be worthy of acceptance by their fabulous elders, the supermen. There is a mystical trend in it all which is confounding.

If one penetrates into this strange world there will be surprise after surprise. Death has a great importance. Maybe it is a sort of "Todestrieb," an instinct of self destruction. The German poet Heinrich Heine is frequently quoted when he says: death is nothing, but dying is a disgusting invention. By the word dying is meant the slow humiliating decay of age. To die young, if possible during fighting, is considered something beautiful and attractive. It means to be spared the repelling decay of age, which so often means desperate clinging to a life which is no longer worth the name. And it is a fact, well known to doctors and priests, that young people very often die with much more courage than old.

One of the legendary officers belonging to these crack units, and one of the inspirers of the O.A.S., speaks the language these young men understand, how-

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ever strange this language may seem to us. He says: "We have to suffer much in order to have the right to die. This is something no animal in the world can understand." And precisely this—"no animal in the world"—has become the title of a book which has had a great success in Algeria. This is how he describes the death of a mortally wounded comrade in arms: "He had to make a last effort to die. He knew that he had won and therefore his face seemed so peaceful and beautiful to us. What he had been seeking on the other side of the crest was not a couple of Bedouins and their arms, but this strange something which had fascinated him for so long and which exists only in sacrifice and death. This is the only thing which makes it possible to melt into what is great and difficult to achieve. That was how he understood God."

These legendary officers—and there are several of them—have been compared to the Pied Piper of Hamelin, the magician who played such tunes on his flute that he finally fascinated all the children in the town to follow him. If one tries to discover the source of this fascination, it seems to be that these young men react violently against the welfare state of the type which is rising everywhere in Europe quite independently of its political origin. According to them, there is no room for youth in it. They sneer at what the welfare state offers them: a high standard of living.

One of them told me: we don't care about comfortable homes and nice cars and TV sets and insurance and pensions. This is for us what Henry Miller has called "an air-conditioned nightmare." It chokes us. The whole Western world is sick of this mediocrity. Even the Communists do not offer anything else nowadays than a higher standard of living. Isn't it depressing to hear Khrushchev and Kennedy both boast about which of them will reach the highest standard of living in ten years time! We want something else. We want to make something difficult and great of our lives; to take risks for something; to be engaged in something exciting and dangerous.

Is it Fascism, or Nazism? It certainly has some similarities and yet it is different. It undoubtedly does have something to do with the reaction against the welfare state, be it the capitalist or the Communist brand, everywhere in Europe among the young, called "teddy boys" in England and by different names in every country, but all of them strangely like each other. Is there no way to save from the diabolic temptation of violence the idealism which undoubtedly very often lies underneath that reaction?

Duerrenmatt and the Kriminalroman

GEOFFREY WAGNER

THE UNRENDERED subtitle of the Swiss writer Duerrenmatt's most successful novel in this country, *The Pledge*, is *Requiem auf den Kriminalroman*. And indeed his originality lies largely in a new handling of the murder-mystery tradition, rather than in his drama. His best books, which include the untranslated *Der Verdacht* (suspicion), are modern morality fables, filled with implication. If radio writing has imposed the mousetrap of immediate suspense on Duerrenmatt's work, this very tidiness is derided from within the novels themselves. He has made the murder-mystery genre his own.

What Duerrenmatt has assumed in the tradition is the martyrological appeal of that kind of *Kriminalroman* which bifurcated out of the Gothic romance a century or more ago, in the hands of Gaboriau and others. There are usually some pretty gory crimes in a Duerrenmatt thriller, as there are in life; but it is notable that he sets these inside the cozily regulated world of Swiss bourgeois values. He need not, for instance, have made the concentration-camp surgeon in *The Quarry* Swiss at all. But this is about as far as one can go. For the rest Duerrenmatt inclines to parody the formal mystery.

First, he violates the convention by having his detective-hero old, decrepit, and now dying. In *The Judge and his Hangman* Barlach's days are numbered; in *The Quarry* he is almost throughout in bed! This is to emphasize the moral fiber in Barlach's failing flesh, a contrast Duerrenmatt exploits in frequent scenes where we feel a startlingly unconventional pity for our surrogate avenger; the detective appears oddly impotent before the criminal, until we realize the power of the former's ethical convictions. Thus Tschanz sees Barlach in *The Judge and his Hangman:* "The old man stretched out on the couch and pulled the cover over him. He was lying there, frail and helpless, and all of a sudden he looked terribly old and withered . . . Then Tschanz looked into Barlach's eyes. They were calm, clear and inscrutable, and they returned his gaze without flinching."

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There is little of the swift, easy retribution native to he *Kriminalroman* and which psychologists say appeals o us on the level of a kind of animal-trainer or ringnaster to our instincts; it is this appeal Jacques Barzun elieves to be (together with the puzzle element) the elaxing side of such reading. Indeed, there is no real etribution at all. Barlach refuses to execute Tschanz, eaving it to "chance"; he has executed Gastmann beause he *knew* him, had identified evil within him ("I'm he only man who knows what kind of a person you are, nd therefore I'm the only man who can judge you").

Secondly, Barlach lacks the conventional paraphernalia of his trade. He is singularly inexpert. The most he vill do is pad an arm against a dog. Conventionally, he thriller hero either settles things with his weapons r, preferably, fists (from Bulldog Drummond to Mike Hammer) or else with ingenious apparatus (Sherlock Holmes); the inferential apparatus Holmes deployed ppealed to a British bourgeoisie which felt themselves, t the turn of the century, in charge of a nascent empirical science. The identification was, of course, with he admiring Watson. Holmes made his "scientific" deductions and iconically ordered an increasingly complex vorld outside the Baker Street den: as Rex Stout has aid "people who don't like mystery stories are anrchists!"

HOWEVER, the villain in this genre was always *someone else*, as Edmund Wilson well observed. Unlike ealist art, the *Kriminalroman* assured its readers they vere not guilty, that the inquisitor's prey was always The Other. This was really the most unpleasant side of he murder-mystery since it assumed a pattern of thinkng wherein non-human status could be accorded to umans. It was but a step further to the concentrationamps (as Duerrenmatt implies in *The Quarry*). Not nly is his habitual villain not The Other, in *Traps* it s actually you. We too, Duerrenmatt is saying, have een as morally oblivious as Traps. It was our ethical egligence which produced the torturer-villain of *The Quarry*.

Furthermore, in the Gothic romance, as in the common comic-book, repayment of some sort was obligatory. Duerrenmatt again flagrantly violates this code: he villains of both *The Pledge* and *The Judge and his Hangman* die in "accidents," while in *The Quarry* the etribution takes place outside the law. In *The Quarry* Barlach and in *The Pledge* Matthäi have their operative lashes of insight outside the organized legal system. In he former of these two books Barlach explicitly concedes the existence of the devil. Here Emmenberger is "the evil dragon," slain by the force of the spirit. That evil is so very powerful adds a dimension to Duerrenmatt's scope, since the villain's end is never certain. In his work retribution is an act of individual discrimination. The law is excellent for regulating traffic, we are once told by this ironic Berner who kills his criminals off in cars, but it cannot necessarily eliminate the evil within us.

There is then the suggestion that evil within our orderly Western societies, as epitomized by Switzerland, can be especially potent. Traps, who has never been anything but orderly all his life, is proved by the tribunal to have committed every crime. He is made imaginative. Transformed into an esthetic figure, Traps lives symbolically and recognizes this new freedom with joy; at the same time he has awakened to a higher moral level, and so become worthy of judgment. He becomes, in short, human. "I'm beginning to understand myself," Traps finally tells the prosecutor, Zorn (the symbolic nomenclature—Kummer, Gygax, Hephaeston—is unusually intrusive here).

In *The Pledge* there is a similar suggestion in the *Galgenhumor* passage at the end, when we meet the rich, respected Frau Schrott, the real criminal in the book, who has nursed absolute evil (in Albert) like an asp to her bosom. The Swiss clinic is a parody of our civilization, and it fails to anesthetize evil; both Doctor Locher, in *The Pledge*, and Doctor Hungertobel, in *The Quarry*, see the obsessions of Matthäi and Barlach respectively as madness. Yet Matthäi and Barlach are right as moral agents, although the former tragically destroys the world about him to achieve his aim. Matthäi's obsessive logic is likened to that of an automatism and, as an attitude to reality, it can end up in the guise of the criminal obsession of a Gastmann, or an SS surgeon (in *The Quarry*).

Nevertheless, it is a form of persistence, a form of reason used as imagination, that can—and in Barlach does—lead to good; it is an awakened sensibility superior to the unreal attitude of the fantastic Frau Schrott, or even the common sense acceptance of worldly values of Herr M., whose frivolous and materialist wife is seen at the end of *The Pledge* ordering the murderer's bait, fat Swiss truffles.

IN SHORT, chance in these books becomes a category of thought, not dissimilar to the role allowed Dame Fortune in the Middle Ages. Chance is a breakdown, or *Panne* (the German title of *Traps*). "Destiny has fled the stage." Neither in *The Visit* nor in *Traps* is destiny just. Final justice is taken over by a higher power than man, who can simply effect a private squaring of accounts. Only the victim can execute the hangman. That is why the Jew Gulliver eradicates Emmenberger in *The Quarry* and why Barlach destroys Gastmann in *The Judge and his Hangman*, too.

As we read in *The Quarry* (in a passage where I have allowed myself one correction of the translation): "We as individuals cannot save this world, that would be as hopeless a task as that of poor Sisyphus. It was not given into our hands, and not into those of a mighty

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person or a people or of the devil—even though he is the most powerful of us all—but into God's hands, who makes His decisions alone. We can help only in single instances, not in the whole. . . ."

Barlach's heroic humility certainly ennobles Duerrenmatt's thrillers, but even it cannot raise these novels to high art. Verbally, Duerrenmatt is not particularly vital and his characterization is perfunctory. Yet his work is not *kitsch* and it is deserving of something better than the contempt poured recently on *The Quarry* by Elizabeth Janeaway in that inflated book list, th New York *Times Sunday Book Review*. A man wh writes *kitsch* doesn't spend two-thirds of each boo philosophizing. Duerrenmatt's attitude is essentially se rious and therefore endearing; indeed one is tempted t observe that it is more honest to utilize romance, or th *Kriminalroman*, in the interests of exposing reality, tha spuriously to utilize realism for the purposes of whip ping up a romance, in the manner of John O'Hara an our current traducers of Zola.

AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

"Closed-Door Catholicism?"

Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITORS: I was very much impressed by Edward Ahearn's "Closed-Door Catholicism?" [April 20], but I think his rhetoric got out of hand when he tried to write about foreign aid. I would agree with him that on this issue, so urgent on moral grounds, the Church has done too little. But as my own recent statement to the Foreign Affairs Committee makes clear, there has not been a "silence of Catholicism concerning foreign aid." The National Catholic Rural Life Conference has been vocal and active on this issue for many years and so have the Catholic Association for International Peace, the Catholic Relief Services, and other responsible Catholic agencies. Perhaps Mr. Ahearn has never heard of these organizations?

(Rev.) JAMES L. VIZZARD, S.J.

New York, N.Y.

TO THE EDITORS: I'm surprised that keen edtorial eyes let pass such a manifestation of crass ignorance—however idealistically informed and motivated—as E. H. Ahearn's "Closed Door Catholicism?" . . . Hasn't the author ever read the bishops' Statements, positions of the Men's Council, Women's Council, CAIP, Catholic Rural Life Conference—testimony of Catholic groups before Congressional Committees, etc. etc? I have no doubt he may have moved in a closed-door circuit at home, but that is not necessarily a picture of U.S. Catholicism, a fact of which I am sure the editors are fully aware.

The author's personal discovery is important but the fact that millions of his fellow Catholics have preceded him in such a discovery should not lessen the effect of his own personal efforts. How about a positive picture that will reinforce the sense of solidarity among the many who have been pushing (and influencing) this sort of thing for a long time?

CATHERINE SCHAEFFER

Washington, D.C

TO THE EDITORS: In the April 20th issue of Th Commonweal there appeared an article entitled "Close Door Catholicism?" written by Edward J. Ahearn. feel that it is necessary to enter a protest on the decisio of the editors to print this article. I am not protestin against Mr. Ahearn; obviously anyone may write an ar ticle, drawing upon whatever fund of knowledge h might have. However, I do believe that it is incumben upon the editors of a journal such as The Commonwea to demand a modicum of scholarship from its authors The genuinely valuable contribution of The Common weal to American Catholic intellectual life cannot b compromised by articles such as the one in question

This article flays about so wildly in such broad area of religious, economic, sociological and political life tha it defies analysis. How does one respond to a critic wh criticizes the lack of "intellectuals" in the America Catholic community, criticizes without realizing the his torical framework of that community and withou recognizing the intellectual ferment taking place o Catholic campuses across our land? The writer identi fies the work of Christ with a national campaign con taining all the trappings of Madison Avenue publicit and identifies the quiet workings of the Church wit "apathy."

There is "apathy," we all admit, but probabl less in the American church than in the churches o other lands, modern, medieval or ancient. Acknowledg ing failures by Catholics in the racial question, how is i possible to respond to an author who apparently ha forgotten the leadership given by Cardinal Ritter i St. Louis, Archbishop O'Boyle in Washington, Arch bishop Rummel in New Orleans, and the hundreds o courageous priests, religious and laymen who have bee in the forefront of the struggle, attaining the ends o Christ quietly without pomp and circumstance? How does one answer? He does not, does not because to d

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o would demand writing a course in history, psychology, ecology, politics and current events.

Ignoring the broad generalizations of the article, I o wish to call attention to one of the accusations made gainst the Church in America. I wish to call attention o it because it is false and also because in a less crass ıanner The Commonweal has fallen into the same rror. The accusation referred to is that Catholic leaderıip in the recent debate over federal aid to education ·as guilty of callous selfishness and guilty of ignoring ıe national interest. In respect to federal aid to eduation, the first thing to be remembered is that there is o unanimity of opinion concerning it. Americans have een debating the issue for about seventy-five years. Vith all of this debate and with the vast funds exended by professional lobbying groups in support of ederal aid, the fact that no general federal aid ıeasure has passed the Congress would indicate that ıost Americans have not favored it. When the people ·ant something in this country, they usually obtain it. 'atholic leaders in pressing for justice may have opardized the bill but they were not opposing an acnowledged "remedy for a critical, social evil."

Is it fair to categorize the position of Catholic leaderıip as being narrow and selfish? Might we not credit ıis leadership with the wisdom of seeing that inherent ı discriminatory federal legislation would be a threat o educational pluralism in our country? Might we not redit this leadership with sincerity in believing that ıe well-being of the nation rests upon the preservation nd strengthening of religiously-oriented schools that re able to give to America a religiously literate citizen-y? Is it narrow to point out that the attempt to enırine the secular school represents a threat to religious eedom in America? It is said that Catholic leaders ıould have been generous and not struggled for fairess. It would have been generous, yes, but generous ·ith the money of other people. The millions of Cathlic parents, struggling to maintain the schools, would ave had reason for denouncing their leadership if that adership had not presented their case to the nation.

It is said that we who speak out for the Catholic chools and the rights of Americans to choose the kind f education they desire are somehow insensitive to the ational need. I would contend that we are deeply ensitive to the national need and that is why we conıue a difficult struggle. We are seeking to give that hich Mr. Ahearn asks, Christian leadership. It is not o be expected that all will agree with us as to the goal eing sought. However, we would ask only that we be iven credit for sincerity in our efforts and a certain mount of knowledge.

The "sustained and substantial criticism" referred o by Mr. Ahearn is necessary and good. However, with-ı the pages of a responsible journal, this criticism hould be based on facts and sound reasoning. I would expect that I would often disagree with The Commonweal in its philosophy and in the positions taken by its authors. The Commonweal would be an intellectual disappointment if this were not true. I would not expect The Commonweal, either in its editorial policies or in its selection of articles, to violate the principles of objectivity and the canons of sound scholarship.

(Rt. Rev.) O'Neil C. D'Amour
National Catholic Educational Association

The Author Replies

Aix en Provence, France

TO THE EDITORS: I wrote my article with the expectation that it and the ensuing debate would present a fairly complete picture of Catholic activity in several important areas. I thank the authors of the letters above for complementing my critical approach by suggesting some of the ways in which Catholics do support foreign aid and the U.N.

Father Vizzard's remarks are more moderate than mine, but he also notes the need for increased Catholic effort in these areas. This would seem to be more accurate than Miss Schaefer's statement that my article is merely personal and that my criticisms do not apply to "millions" of Catholics. Obviously my article was intended to be a record of personal realization, but a record, too, which reflects the opinions and experience of many colleagues and friends. I do not believe that my experience of apathy among Catholics with regard to foreign aid is an isolated phenomenon; and I would say that the excellent work of the Catholic Rural Life Conference and the Catholic Welfare Conference has yet to make an impact on the parochial and active lives of many.

The lack of dynamism in our parish life which I discussed has still to be overcome. I hope that the account of my own realization of this fact will help to accomplish this for the few hundred Catholics (left over from Miss Schaefer's "millions") who are still engulfed in "crass ignorance." Miss Schaefer might have helped by actually presenting "the positive picture" of what Catholic organizations are doing; and every Commonweal reader can and must participate in his own parish by working with clergy and parish organizations in an effort to renew our Christian life.

I will answer Monsignor D'Amour in detail. He contends that my article violates "the principles of objectivity and the canons of sound scholarship." This is unsubstantiated rhetoric, introduced to discredit my opinions without really coming to grips with them. It is easy to dismiss an argument as "defying analysis"; easy to imply that one could refute it with all one's wealth of historical, psychological and political knowledge . . . if there were only time. It is harder to examine an arti-

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cle, even when it runs counter to one's habitual opinions, to see if it contains some truth.

Thus, while crying "scholarship," Monsignor D'Amour consistently distorts my remarks. He says that I criticize the lack of Catholic "intellectuals," but if he rereads the article he will find that this is untrue. On the contrary, I stated my confidence that there are many Catholic laymen, "social workers, teachers, lawyers, doctors," ready to participate more fully in the life of the Church. Obviously he paid little attention to my argument, but was content to cloud the issue by invoking a non-existent attack on Catholic intellectuals: not very good scholarship.

Monsignor D'Amour accuses me of misunderstanding the history of the Catholic intellectual community and the current "ferment" on our campuses, but does he himself understand that history? Doesn't he realize that my article represents an aspect of that intellectual renewal, and that this renewal is in part the impatience of a younger generation with existing weaknesses? It is ironic that he uses as a catchword the very "ferment" which he does not understand and which he refuses to confront.

Monsignor D'Amour also skirts the problem of Catholic apathy, by claiming that it exists "probably less" in America than in all other lands and in all other times, "modern, medieval or ancient." Even if this statement could be verified (by the "modicum of scholarship" demanded by him but not evident in this gratuitous remark), the question of *our* apathy, in this present, real world, remains unanswered. Crying that others are worse than we is merely a facile way of avoiding our own faults and settling back into our comfortable sleep.

Monsignor D'Amour attempts to refute my remarks on racism by referring to Cardinal Ritter and Archbishops O'Boyle and Rummel. I am well aware that their great work fulfills my desire for increased activity by the hierarchy. But does Monsignor D'Amour pretend that the actions of three Bishops exhaust the possible activity for Catholics in the field of civil rights? Does he pretend that Washington, St. Louis and New Orleans are the only cities where the racial problem exists? Doesn't he know anything of the Northern cities to which I referred in my article, where racial discrimination by Catholics is rampant? These problems are glossed over by the standard rhetorical appeal to the "hundreds of courageous priests . . . in the forefront of the struggle, attaining the ends of Christ quietly without pomp and circumstance."

I too know of Catholics who are quietly doing Christ's work, but I also have direct experience of others who are just as quietly practicing the foulest of discriminations. Discussions with friends and colleagues, as well as personal letters received in response to my article, convince me that this experience is not an isolated one. And it is precisely to such real ex perience that I appeal in rejecting Catholic complac ency in the field of civil rights.

The attempt by Monsignor D'Amour to discredit thi realism is perhaps most unfair when he grossly distort my argument as containing "all the trappings c Madison Avenue." I outlined carefully what I mean b a national Catholic campaign: public action by th hierarchy, "sermons, editorials, door-to-door appeal by parish groups such as the Holy Name societies, participation of professional people and youth in campaign to fight racism within the parish and to edu cate Catholics to the larger perspectives of Christianit in the modern world. Although I do not conceive c this as particularly "Madison Avenue," I do admit tha it is less quiet—and more difficult—than inactivity.

Monsignor D'Amour's remarks on school-aid ar hardly more cogent. He does confront, only to rejec my call for a more expansive attitude to that legislatior But he tries to bolster this rejection by using my articl as a sounding board for his own prejudices. He implie that my argument threatens religious pluralism, en shrines the secular school, menaces "the rights of Amer icans to choose the kind of education they desire." A of this is so much hysteria which could have bee avoided simply by reading my opening remark o school-aid: "Personally, I agree with the Catholic pos tion that religious freedom should preclude discrim nation in federal aid."

It is true that some persons want to enshrine the sec ular school, but I do not; nor is it clear that the grantin of federal aid to public schools will have this effec Having been trained in excellent Catholic schools, I ar not disposed to advocate their destruction. But I d argue that at this juncture in history, for political an moral reasons, our national education is a more pres ing need. And I think it very probable that, once a na tional bill were passed, Catholic schools would soo receive similar aid, at least in the indirect manner al ready proposed by legislators and Church leaders. I seems to me that careful work toward that goal woul be at once more Christian and more efficacious tha hysterical sabotage of the whole bill.

I have discussed Monsignor D'Amour's letter in detai because to me it represents an ingrained inability t admit the existence of failures in contemporary Catholi life. Although he calls for "scholarship" and closes on touching plea for sympathy, he has refused to grant m arguments objective consideration. And yet clear ap praisal of our activity is precisely what is essential t the renewal of the work of Christ. Certainly there ar individuals and organizations doing fine work. T identify that effort with perfection, while glossing ove our deficiencies with complacent catchwords and spur ious rhetoric—that surely is to hinder the improvemen which we, and the world, need. EDWARD J. AHEARN

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THE STAGE

All Frame, No Portrait

WHY IT SHOULD have taken three collaborators to make a dismal adaptation of James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is hard to understand; any pipe-smoking rumpled conductor of a "Write that Play!" seminar could have done it over his morning wheat-germ. I can only assume that Phoebe Brand, Frederic Ewen and John Randolph, in addition to wanting to present us with a corporate authorship in order to make it impossible for us to sue any one of them, have also wished to benefit from one another's reinforcing and qualm-killing presence during those furtive hours when they were taking the life from one of the root novels of our time.

Some weeks ago I wrote that the process of turning a good novel into a play most often resulted in the creation of a travesty or a ghost. But Miss Brand and Messrs. Ewen and Randolph have managed to turn Joyce's book into both. They have destroyed nearly everything substantial and complex and lyrical in the book, stultified its linguistic achievement, perverted its intention and thoroughly violated its spirit. Their play is a glittering product of the Adult Education mind's furious desire to change art into instruction, to fit handles to elusive objects and make programmatic and explicit whatever has its reality in opacity and indirection.

I have an idea that they worked for a while under the provisional title "I Leap Over the Wall," until they found out it was taken and switched to "Stephen Dedalus—the Making of a Liberal," before ultimately being persuaded that they ought to string along with Joyce. The title is just about all they have been faithful to, unless they wish us to credit them with having used some of the novel's actual words and scenes and followed roughly its chronology. But that is like dismembering a body and then putting it together again, using *some* of its parts and arranging them *roughly* in the same order.

It would really have been more logical, if less potentially remunerative, for the triumvirate to have used some such title as I have suggested, since the one Joyce saw fit to employ is so contrary to their purposes. The truly astonishing thing about this adaptation is that it works so hard to keep from the audience the knowledge that Joyce was writing about the making of a sensibility and the coming to maturity of an artist, the making of an apostate—and not a thorough-going one at that—being of subsidiary importance, the ground and matter of the experience and not its ruling impulse.

For Ewen and Randolph and Miss Brand, however, the de-Catholicizing of Stephen Dedalus is very much the central intention of Joyce's work, indeed the only one, so that is what their play is concerned with. Even that would not have been such a perversion, since the event does literally happen, if they had given to it a fraction of the anguish, conflict and richness of texture that Joyce did. But the array of leering, tyrannical, *Maria-Monk*-type priests, the simple-minded or demented lay representatives of the faith, Stephen's Irish Civil Liberties Union opposition to them, and above all the fact that nothing else is allowed to modulate this black-and-white morality play—all add up to a drama which had the audience smirking in appreciation and congratulating itself at its good fortune in living in the home of the priest-free.

I have called "Portrait of the Artist" a drama, and that is the purest kind of courtesy. As might be expected from its tendentious origins, it is almost entirely undramatic, consisting in a series of tableaus, declamations, point-making interchanges and arty little epiphanies during which the light gradually dies while a few of Joyce's integumentary poetic passages are flung at the titillated, culture-loving audience. The acting is suitably non-existent, with the exception of Robert Brown, who has played Dedalus before and knows at least how to look like him. But, then, how can you act the part of a poster or chapter-heading unless you become one?

I should add that "Portrait of the Artist" is a long one-acter, and that it is preceded on the program by a shorter play called "The Barroom Monks." This one has only a single author, Joseph Carroll, who is listed in the Playbill as being connected with *Sports Illustrated* magazine. The sport he engages in here is once again that of watching the Catholics run, the leading sprinter being in this case an alcoholic priest who has been barred from exercising his sacerdotal duties and is bitter about it. Mr. Carroll exhibits on his behalf a rudimentary sense of humor and no sense whatever of what it takes to make a play.

Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead! (*At the Martinique.*) RICHARD GILMAN

THE SCREEN

Paths of Glory?

EVIDENTLY the customers who pay at the box office are still buying war pictures. It isn't likely that the movie makers would continue to turn them out unless they showed some kind of profit; and Darryl Zanuck is investing millions in "The Longest Day," a World War II epic about the Normandy invasion. While waiting for this high-budget opus to be released in the fall, movie goers will have to settle for three less expensive war films in release this summer. Employing a lot of

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male actors and extras and very few women, these three films have one thing in common: they work overtime to show what heroes are made of.

Don Siegel, the director of "Hell Is for Heroes" (Paramount), said of his film: "The awful threat of war is again upon the world. My purpose, in dramatic terms, is to make the somber reminder that war is not fun and death is not pretty." Although, in telling a story about the heroism of a squad of G.I.s in Belgium near the Siegfried Line, Siegel manages to paint a gory picture of battle and death, he is not entirely successful in his purpose. The script by Richard Carr has a contrived air even though it is based on Robert Pirosh's story which was inspired by an actual incident during the 1944 breakthrough of the Siegfried Line. All this may have happened, but in the movie it seems maneuvered, mainly because the main characters are theatrically vivid but without depth; and *the* big hero is so unpleasantly sullen he is almost unbelievable.

Steve McQueen has this role of the embittered meanie down pat, and once again he plays it well. It's not his fault that his surliness and drinking are not motivated. He is surrounded by some nice guys, some gold-brickers, and some hard-working foot sloggers—all with cause to be war-weary: Joseph Hoover as the earnest company commander, Fess Parker as a likable sergeant, Bobby Darin as the business-like G.I. who's collecting "liberated" loot, Harry Guardino as the staff sergeant resented by Steve who lost his stripes after a drunken spree, and several others.

After the introductions, "Hell Is for Heroes" shows the squad in courageous action against the Germans—when these few men have to fool the enemy into thinking they are a whole company, when Steve McQueen, disobeying orders and snatching the command from Sgt. Guardino, leads two men against a German pillbox and returns after their death and his failure to face the captain's threatened courtmartial, and finally when McQueen singlehandedly attacks the pillbox and blows himself up with it. No doubt the deadly seriousness of the lengthy, bloody battle, McQueen's unconventional conduct, and the eventual victory require some release from the dramatic tension; but the introduction of Bob Newhart and one of his telephone monologues (to fool the Germans) becomes an artificial device suggesting that war could be fun. I'm sure this is not what director Siegel had in mind.

NO DOUBT a war film now-a-days needs an off-beat theme to attract attention. In "War Hunt" (United Artists), producer Terry Sanders and director Denis Sanders go even farther out than "Hell Is for Heroes." Their hero is a psychotic killer, a one-man commando who goes out nightly behind the enemy lines gathering valuable information and ruthlessly killing any enemy who may be around. The setting is Korea, 1953, shortly before the truce; but there is no let-up in the war, "a peculiar war" if there ever was one.

Actually "War Hunt" is an anti-war film; and it is trying to say that while an obsessed killer like the daring hero played by John Saxon may be an asset in war, he is a dangerous threat to peace. When the ceasefire comes, Saxon continues his forays and jeopardizes the truce. He has to be hunted down by his own squad and shot by his own captain. The Sanders brothers succeed in making their film interesting at times. It has some good photography by Ted McCord and a pleasing performance by Robert Redford as the young soldier who tells the story; but the whole thing gets too pretentious and arty in putting over its point about an unheroic, war-loving hero.

ALTHOUGH more conventional than the other two war movies, "Merrill's Marauders" (Warners) is the best of the three. Well produced by Milton Sperling and effectively directed by Samuel Fuller this film about Brigadier General Frank Merrill and his infantry unit known as the Marauders conveys best the quality of unspectacular wartime heroes—the men who trudge through jungles in Japanese-held Burma and who fight not only the enemy but also fatigue, hunger, malaria and typhus as well.

At times the story seems repetitive as Merrill and his Marauders struggle on, wage battle, bicker among themselves, try not to succumb to exhaustion. But this very repetition is what helps to involve the viewer in the action. Furthermore, the acting though good throughout is kept on the simple, underplayed side: with the late Jeff Chandler as Merrill, Ty Hardin as a sincere young lieutenant, Andrew Duggan as the doctor, and Claude Akins, Peter Brown, Will Hutchins and many others in this 1944 trek across Burma. Director Fuller uses his cast and the jungles and plains of the Philippines (where the picture was handsomely photographed in Technicolor) to put over the grueling experiences of the Marauders in steaming Burma. And he gets across the idea that perhaps courage and bravery are sometimes just the ability to put one foot in front of the other and still have enough strength left to fire a gun.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG

AN APPEAL: Archbishop Hurley seeks help for eleven thousand poor Zulus in South African mission schools. The Union of South Africa, in its *apartheid* policy, has cut off all aid to these schools. Many of the Zulu children "come to school each day with their tiny stomachs empty." Contributions should be sent to: Most Rev. Denis E. Hurley, O.M.I., Archbishop's Residence, Catholic Cathedral, Durban, South Africa. (Airmail 25c)

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Equality Before the Law

)ne Man's Freedom. By Edward 'ennett Williams. Atheneum. $5.95.

by Nat Hentoff

:ARL WARREN has expressed rave doubts that the Bill of Rights -if it were presented as a piece of iew legislation—would pass Con- ress. To extend this dispiriting peculation, there are even graver loubts that the majority of the ountry would today support all hose safeguards in full. And the re- ıctance would not come only from he Right. The fact that James Hof- a's civil liberties have been fre- uently abused by Congressional ommittees seems of small interest o most liberals. A year ago, a num- ıer of Jews who consider them- elves civil libertarians violently rotested the right of George Lin- oln Rockwell to speak in New 'ork, and that city's mayor—a tower f expediency—yielded to their pres- ure until finally overruled by the ourts.

The bristling virtue of Edward 3ennett Williams' book is that it un- lerlines with inescapable clarity and onsistency the fact that liberty is ndivisible and that widespread mis- nderstanding—wilful and otherwise -of civil liberties is not a monopoly f McCarthyism. Williams is an ex- ıert on the subject in practice as vell as theory, since his career in ecent years has notably demon- trated Justice Frankfurter's dictum: 'It is a fair summary of history to ay that the safeguards of liberty ıave frequently been forged in ases involving not very nice eople."

Williams' clients have included uch testers of our belief in equality efore the law as Hoffa, Joseph Mc- Carthy, Frank Costello, Adam Clay- on Powell, Dave Beck, and a Rus- ian member of the United Nations taff who was accused of espionage gainst the United States. Williams ook these and many other prickly ases because of his fierce desire "to restore the defense of personal liber- ty to the position of prestige now reserved for the defense of property rights."

Williams' book is not simply a series of case histories. He does include illustrations from his victories, but the base of the volume is Williams' exploration of the nature of our civil liberties and the many ways they can, have been, and are being eroded. In his discussion, for example, of McCarthy's trial by the Senate, Williams points out that his client was the victim in that joust of a form of McCarthyism. The only one of the forty-six charges against McCarthy which the Senate validated was his refusal two years earlier to appear before the Gillette sub-committee. Yet, not only was McCarthy given insufficient time to answer the subcommittee's request, but—as Williams learned after the censure—McCarthy had had a strong argument for refusing to testify at all. Staff members of the Gillette sub-committee had put all of McCarthy's personal mail under surveillance, a wholly unjustified invasion of his privacy.

In several chapters, Williams makes grimly clear how a number of Congressional committees have forgotten, if they ever knew, that Congress is neither a law enforcement nor a trial agency. "Many members of Congress," Williams notes, "still honestly believe that the scope of congressional inquiry is limited only by the scope of their own imagination."

Williams is particularly alarmed and infuriated by the increasing "legitimacy" of wire tapping. He opposes this aid to "efficient" law enforcement on the very solid ground of the Fourth Amendment. In view of Attorney General Kennedy's growing permissiveness on the subject, I would strongly suggest that one of the networks arrange a debate on this issue between Williams and Kennedy. Both the Attorney General and the country at large need to learn a lot more about constitutional law than they know. "The odious writs of assistance," Williams emphasizes, "and the general warrants against which James Otis thundered in the Boston State House in February, 1761, were puny instruments of tyranny compared to the . . . induction coil and contactless wiretap." A chilling sub-theme in this section concerns the extent to which law enforcement officers have been breaking the law for years by wiretapping with virtual impunity.

Williams also objects with force, logic, and highly relevant detail to capital punishment; inadequate legal definitions of mental illness in criminal cases; trial by newspaper while a case is in litigation; and the use of pressure groups to boycott sellers of "indecent" literature. Perhaps the most vital chapter of all is his argument for the application of civil rules of pre-trial discovery procedures to criminal cases, so that "no defendant should ever enter the courtroom ignorant of both the identity of his accusers and the nature of their accusation." As it is, too many criminal cases become a "combat by surprise."

There are other sections of the book that should be of major interest and illumination to us all, particularly to Congressmen; and I hope someone reads into the *Congressional Record* Williams' pragmatic outline of how the nation-states can be brought to subscribe to a world rule of law through the strengthening and expansion of the World Court as a first step.

This reviewer has only one reservation about the book and that involves Williams' sweeping assertion that "God is the essence of our moral code." I regard this imputation of amorality to nonbelievers—and its assumption of the reverse equation—as decidedly unproved in or outside of any courtroom.

Faulkner Smiles

The Reivers. By William Faulkner. Random House. $4.95.

by Thomas F. Curley

WRITING of a visit with Faulkner, Robert Cantwell has told us that Faulkner's earliest recollection was

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of getting a pony at the age of three and of waiting for the saddle to be made. When he went out to the farm to see about it there was an old Negro there, Uncle Ned, who had been Colonel Faulkner's servant and had cared for three generations of Faulkners. Faulkner said to Cantwell: "He is a cantankerous old man who approves of nothing I do." It may be that it is Uncle Ned who is recreated, or transmogrified, in *The Reivers* (the word means plunderers), the newest and probably the mellowest of Faulkner's books.

Of the Yoknapatawphan clans, it is the McCaslins, or rather the Priests, the cadet branch of the McCaslin line, that Faulkner writes about here. The book begins: "Grandfather said . . ." Grandfather is speaking in 1961 about something that happened to him as a boy in 1905, happened to him and Boon Hogganbeck, the tough, faithful, brave, unreliable great-grandson of one of Issetibbeha's Chickasaws; to Lucius Priest and Boon Hogganbeck and Ned McCaslin, the Negro member of the McCaslin family. It happened to Grandfather, when he and Boon "borrowed" the new Winton Flyer which his Grandfather, who did not think automobiles had a future, had bought because Colonel Sartoris had just issued a decree outlawing them in Jefferson.

Boon and Lucius take the car; Ned stows away for the ride to Memphis where, of course, they head for Miss Reba's house, Boon having saved up just for such a trip. Popeye is not there, but Mr. Binford is, though he is seen only briefly. He never got to eat it, but he was the only one at the table to be served a hot supper that Saturday night. "(You see how much ahead of his time Mr. Binford was? Already a Republican. I don't mean a 1905 Republican—I don't know what his Tennessee politics were, or if he had any—I mean a 1961 Republican. He was more: he was a Conservative. Like this: a Republican is a man who made his money; a Liberal is a man who inherited his; a Democrat is a barefooted Liberal in a cross country race; a Conservative is a Republican who has learned to read and write.)"

Faulkner does not spend much time on Binford. The poor man had a weakness for horses, for betting on them, that is. He had just lost; he left the table in shame. Ned also had a weakness for horses, for running them, and no sooner did Mr. Binford leave in disgrace than Ned turned up with a horse for which he had just swapped the Winton Flyer. There is no space to go into the whys and wherefores of such a swap. Let it suffice that the horse—call him Lightning—liked to run just a bit behind other horses. Ned, who could persuade a mule to run, was gambling that just once he could get Lightning to run in front—that once being enough to win back the Winton Flyer.

So we have a horse race going. And a story. Has anyone ever deplored Faulkner's long-winded sentences and tangled syntax? Well some of the sentences are long but you will not have any difficulty in following them. The language is supple, plain, vigorous. At one point Ned says to a gentleman: "It strikes me that Sam Caldwell is a better name for this kind of horse business than twice some others a man could mention around here. A little more, and I could be wishing me and you was frequent enough to be permanent. Kindly much obliged."

You have the horse race; you have the language as it should be written. Not only that, young Lucius manages to make an honest woman of one of Miss Reba's girls, and to get Boon Hogganbeck a wife in the bargain. I don't know what the critics will say, but I can't imagine anyone who likes to read caring much.

A Man Apart

The Accident. By Elie Wiesel. Hill and Wang. $3.

by James Finn

ANYONE WHO has read Elie Wiesel's first book, *Night*, must, I think, approach any other book of his with a degree of trepidation. *Night* is an account of his early youth, a youth that was spent largely in the concentration camps of Germany. In those camps he was separated from his mother and a sister whom he was never again to see; h observed the suffering and death c his father; he saw black smoke ris from the cremated bodies of infant and he suffered the loss of his faitl For Elie Wiesel, God died in thos concentration camps.

All this he related with brevit and intensity and such emotiona clarity that one sometimes longed fc a hint of self-pity or sentimentalit to relieve the harshness of his visior That first book deserved every er comium it received. But one thought and feeling went immed ately beyond it to its author. That h could have written it at all, afte undergoing the experiences he de scribed, represented a triumph c the human spirit that one immedi ately acknowledged, but of suc proportions that it was difficult t comprehend.

On reading that the author o *Night* had written two novels soon t be published, my feelings were de cidedly ambivalent. That he coul write, there was no doubt. But be tween autobiographical accounts an the novel there is a great divid which many fine writers have faile to bridge. Participation in great an harrowing actions does not neces sarily produce great or even goo artists. And it seemed almost to cruel that the person who underwen the experiences described in *Nigh* should now subject himself to th shifting judgments of publishers, re viewers and critics, to the whol business that is the book industry to day.

Dawn, the first of these novels, re ceived mixed reviews and I mysel could find in it few of the virtues it most enthusiastic critics discerned It seemed, in fact, a poor wooder construction that I couldn't brin myself to review.

The Accident, which is the whol point of this long introduction, is a quite different affair. A *récit*, rathe than a novel or a novelette, it ha few characters, a highly limited number of scenes and a narrow if in tense range of emotion. Within these self-imposed restrictions and in spite of awkward flaws, Wiesel has ac complished almost everything he in tended, and the result is a work o extraordinary power. The narrato

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ıd a girl who is attached to him are ossing a busy street in New York hen he is hit by a car. His injuries e sufficiently serious that his life ıngs in the balance. A doctor, much ore than the narrator himself, orks to save that life. While the ght goes on, the narrator's mind rows up memories from the past, emories which cause one reluctant- to learn why his desire for and his ıld on life are so highly attenuated, hy he resists so effortlessly and mpletely the life around him.

The novel succeeds in presenting persuasive picture of someone who es existence as a cruelty and an surdity. It is immeasurably more nvincing than the abstract systems hich develop a similar view or than her novels that are filled with ady philosophic reflections on the fferings and anguish of their prin- pal characters. For here there is ither argumentation nor the pres- ıtation of a view; there is, rather, a esentation of a person who has en effectively cut off from what her people regard as true and eaningful. The things which others ıd valuable have been tried in the rnace of his experience, and they ıve melted away. His life has be- ıme meaningless and absurd. If ıyone is entitled to such a view it is person such as the narrator.

For the Christian, for the religious erson, this can be at most an exag- eration of one aspect of life, a facet the truth which loses validity hen it is made to stand for the hole. But the believer who has not ıped with this aspect of our con- mporary existence has come to his ith by an easy path. It is not the ast virtue of *The Accident* that, for ıe attentive reader, it will make ıch untroubled acceptance more fficult.

Welsh Boyhood

eorge. By Emlyn Williams. Ran- om House. $5.95.

by Richard McLaughlin

ERSONAL recollections have re- ently been of an exceptionally high der both in texture and content, evealing a solid grasp of mnemonics or sometimes a memory as "marvelously treacherous" as that of Montaigne. Emlyn Williams' vibrant, down-to-earth story of his Welsh childhood is a superb example of what miracles of originality can still be wrought from familiar material. Warm, evocative, and with a lilt to its vision that matches the cadence of Welsh speech, the noted actor-playwright's success story is written in prose that might well capture a prize if read aloud at one of the National Eisteddfods.

Any resemblance to the usual rags-to-riches saga is skeletal, however; Williams' "early autobiography" only takes us over the first twenty-one years, showing us a world where fantasy, the day dreams of an interior life, helped light up his poverty-stricken surroundings.

"The reason I remember Glenrafon as mostly summer is because in bad weather, when not at school, I was in the snug, arched over print." This was to be George's refuge whenever there was unpleasantness to deal with. And with his parents frequently quarreling over his father's drinking habits, George (he didn't become Emlyn until his Oxford days) found it easier to talk to the people he met in books. He even fancied himself, at six, "an omniscient author" of a book called "George, His Story." "Every night in bed after my quick Welsh prayer—'God Bless Dad Mam Job Thomas Annie Amen'—I would think, what was today's page?"

It was during this period that his convivial but weak-willed father operated a country pub, another one of his ill-fated enterprises. Since neither parent had much understanding of the sensitive, imaginative boy's hunger for learning — they spoke only Welsh and were barely literate—his introduction to the usual English classics was understandably delayed. Young George had to content himself with such romantic claptrap as *A Welsh Singer* and serials in a religious weekly, the *Sunday Companion;* he greeted the make-believe of *The Water Babies* with "a fishy eye," while *David Copperfield* was, with his meager knowledge of English, a complete puzzle from the start.

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When the family moved to a grimy industrial town, there were compensations for leaving behind the "warm bowl of peace" that was always to represent rural Wales to George; "livin' pictiars" made existence on the edge of a slum more bearable. In fact, the gods and goddesses of the "Silver Screen" threatened for a time to dislodge the heroes and heroines of Scott and Eliot from their unchallenged place in his imagination. Though his infatuation with the movies did not diminish, George was at the same time being maneuvered toward higher goals by the astute and blunt-speaking Miss Cooke (the original of Miss Moffat in "The Corn Is Green"), an inspiration to the young scholarship boy at Holywell County School.

Williams' association with Miss Cooke is described with affection and humor. He was quick to see that she was, even before he had tasted life, "a woman larger than it." No matter how he may have inwardly bridled at the numerous "marching orders" he received from her over the years, his eventual mastery of languages, notably French and Italian and subsequent winning of a scholarship to Oxford proved that her faith in him had not been misplaced.

At Oxford, the young linguist, who used to spout lines from "Ruy Blas" to the winds on a bushy hillside, succumbed once and for all to the theater. But Oxford also came near being Emlyn Williams' downfall. The hectic undergraduate parties and large debts culminated in his final debacle, a humiliating, obsessive attachment to another boy that ended in the author's complete breakdown and held up his graduation for a full year.

It was during his recuperation at home that Williams wrote his first three-act play, *Full Moon.* News of a forthcoming performance of the play reached him while he was teaching French to some gentry and his response revealed him to be both Mam's and Dad's son. Caution was his first reaction ("The Mam side of me was sensible"), but soon, exhilaration getting the better of him ("my Dad side soared into surmise"), he was whimsically elab rating on his future triumphs to a audience of Welsh sheep. "But tl sheep looked skeptical, and Mam side took over." As for the waitir world, it had to wait a bit longer f Emlyn Williams to bring his speci glow to the stage.

Melodramatic Quest

Father. By Charles Calitri. Crow $4.95.

by Thomas P. McDonnell

IT IS curious that the theme of tl paternal quest has not been mo fully explored in American liter ture. The theme is no doubt there from the fatherless world of Hu Finn to the patriarchal image in, sa Steinbeck's *East of Eden,* as well in a more than casual number of e cellent poems—and consequently t theme may be a very significant or Also it is no surprise that Charl Calitri should select some lines fro Thomas Wolfe for the epigraph *Father:* "And which of us shall fi his father, / know his face, and what place, / and in what time, and in what land?" For it is inde in this exquisite sense of seekir though surely more disciplined th Wolfe's gigantic restlessness, th Charles Calitri has written a nov of unusual proportions and of mo than usual insight.

Yet it must be said that whatev his novel achieves, it is partly victory over the clichés of its ma rial. The recent flourishing of t fictional life of the Church in t land of its institutional successi does in fact all but assume the s pattern of a morality-play—fro hunchbacks named Gobbio to se inarians on the make and, of cour bishops of questionable intent a sometimes sinister design. Needl to say, this sort of carrying on oft strains credulity—as when the bish in *Father* says of an out-and-o charlatan demanding to be made priest, "It is evident that we are co fronted with a holy man." And wh the same churchman is informed the chief figure of the novel that reputed exorcism was in fact deliberate hoax by the "possesse

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e advocates a compromise for the ake of the true believers.

Again, the unitiated reader will no oubt be slightly disconcerted by the *inzochere,* or groups of holy (and ot so holy) women, who attach hemselves like morose little fan lubs to their favorite priests. Yet ne supposes that nothing should train credulity in Italian mountain illages—which is to say, in the fic-ional extrapolation of human nature tself.

Human nature is, of course, the main ingredient in any novel of consequence, and in this one all the stops are pulled out. Briefly, *Father* concerns the search of the son for his own identity in the image of the father. The complexity is in fact correlative, and is reflected in the form and construction of the novel, which weaves in time-shifts from a celibate past to the connubial present.

Specifically, this is the story of Giunio Bruno the elder, who early enters the priesthood and then breaks from holy orders to seek his ultimate identity in the New World. Naturally, since Guinio the younger is narrator, this venture of the soul includes marriage. Enough psychological groundwork is laid, however, not to render the break either outrageously scandalous or suddenly implausible. Indeed the strength of the novel, in view of its increasingly untoward circumstances, is that it is held together by a certain nobility of character and compassionate sense of integrity. What *Father* manages to do, unlike most works of its kind, is to perceive the subtle and seldom realized relationship between the priesthood of the laity and the priesthood of the ordained.

Still, a question persists even in the face of apparent merit and achievement, and it persists because novelists themselves are not prepared to answer it in their writings. Why is it, then, that writers of fiction are drawn more toward depicting aberrations from spiritual discipline rather than the infinitely richer possibilities involved in the struggle itself? Whatever the answer, it is altogether clear that the novelist's concept of the religious life, and especially that of the priesthood in its fictional re-creation, arises from a melodramatic rather than a truly dramatic sense.

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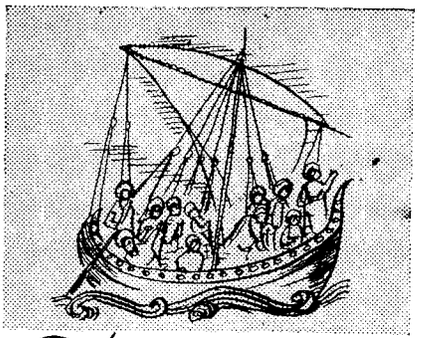

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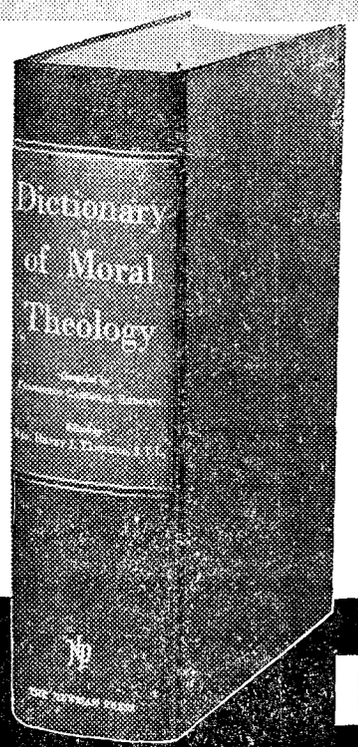

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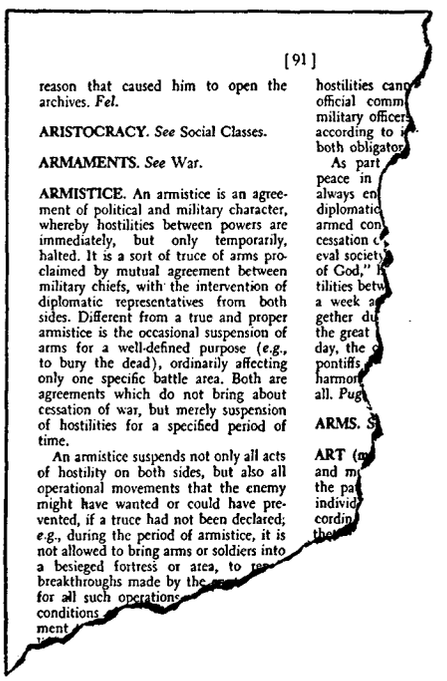

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reason that caused him to open the archives. *Fel.*

ARISTOCRACY. *See* Social Classes.

ARMAMENTS. *See* War.

ARMISTICE. An armistice is an agreement of political and military character, whereby hostilities between powers are immediately, but only temporarily, halted. It is a sort of truce of arms proclaimed by mutual agreement between military chiefs, with the intervention of diplomatic representatives from both sides. Different from a true and proper armistice is the occasional suspension of arms for a well-defined purpose (*e.g.*, to bury the dead), ordinarily affecting only one specific battle area. Both are agreements which do not bring about cessation of war, but merely suspension of hostilities for a specified period of time.

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